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# Lillian Rock war memorial restoration

Efforts to restore the Lillian Rock Primary School WWII Memorial Gates have been greatly assisted by local volunteers.

Secretary of Lismore RSL Sub-branch, Wilson McClelland said, "I am very pleased to report that Bill Cox from *Treefellas* came and donated his time and machinery to clean up the overgrown trees and vegetation.

"This very generous and extremely large effort has opened up the area around the memorial, allowing work to continue with removal of smaller undergrowth. It is hoped that in the near future, depending on volunteers and donations, that work can commence with landscaping, cleaning the memorial and restoration of the existing gates," he said.

Anyone willing to assist, please contact Wilson on 0400-252-119, or Paul 6689-0396, email: [paullebars@gmail.com](mailto:paullebars@gmail.com)



## ANZAC Day 2014

The 2014 ANZAC Day March observance is on Friday 25th April, mustering at the Nimbin Hospital at 10.40am to start the march at 10.45am sharp to arrive at the Nimbin District Memorial for the ceremony and service at 10.50am for a minute's silence at 11am.

We would like to invite all the Nimbin and surrounding communities to participate on the day, in the march, or as a spectator.

Unfortunately due to a lack of

attendance in the last few years, the religious service will not be held at the Nimbin Bowling Club, however the club will have light refreshments available. The Nimbin Hotel will have two-up games from noon.

Any assistance from ex-service personnel or the general community to organise the march, observance and services on the day would be greatly appreciated. Phone Paul 6689-0396 or email: [paullebars@gmail.com](mailto:paullebars@gmail.com)

"Lest We Forget"



## Abbott cans food grants

by Thom Culpeper

The Abbott circus has again broken promises and put in jeopardy the livelihood and welfare of small communities with the scrapping of the \$1.5 million Community Food Grants program.

This Labor government initiative was presented as part of a National Food Plan and submissions were called for, but to no avail. Abbott scrapped

the program, the first of its type to address the food security needs of the local populace, and the 300 applicants wasted their time and future plans.

Their first and most imperative need was to allow food to be supplied and accessed locally. The most important aspects of this policy were the development of dedicated secure all-weather market sites, or site-sharing with the same facilities, owned and managed by the producers.

The rise of farmers markets – there are now hundreds of them – has been driven by both grower and citizen demand. They have served important imperatives of local food security and local work and income retention, which can allow rural capital formation.

Centralised and monopolised fresh food marketing has little or in fact no ticker to cope with the needs of small growers, and little concern for the growing need of citizens who desire access to secure, varied, clean food sources.

'Big food' is extremely energy wasteful. What appear to be cheap lines that are in fact loss leaders, write-offs against tax obligations.

Bundling, sourcing from smaller growers, repacking and supplying to supermarkets does not allow any economy to small growers, they being in the main, price-takers. The result is wage-slavery.

Remember, Canberra: clean land, agriculture and proper animal care require a decent living.

## Farmers tell miner to leave after CSG water contamination

Farmers across north-west NSW have told Santos to leave the region immediately and called for strong action by the NSW Government after it was confirmed on Saturday that Santos CSG activities have contaminated groundwater in the Pilliga.

After hearing that groundwater in the Pilliga has been polluted with heavy metals, including uranium, two farmers, Mark and Cherie Robinson, travelled to the NSW Parliament in Sydney to call for a halt to CSG drilling.

"I am absolutely appalled to learn that groundwater in the Pilliga has been contaminated by CSG activities. It is basically our worst nightmare come true," said Jeff Carolan, a cotton farmer from Wee Waa.

"We have been told repeatedly by Santos and the NSW Government that there was no risk to our water supplies from CSG – and now we know that is absolute rubbish. We're all dependent on groundwater in this valley to keep our businesses viable, and our very livelihoods rely on uncontaminated water and soils. We are not going to stand by while Santos invades our best farmland and pollute our precious water resources and productive soils. They should

immediately cease activities, pack up their equipment and depart – and never come back," he said.

"It's disgraceful that Santos have kept this contamination hidden and misled the local community for close to a year," Narrabri resident Rohan Boehm said.

"Santos have taken out ads in the local paper, telling people they pose no threat to water resources, whilst knowing full well that they have already polluted an aquifer in the Pilliga. Any small shred of trust that the local community might have had in Santos has been totally annihilated by this news. No one will ever believe a word they say again," he said.

"If this is the sort of damage that CSG activities cause in the early phases of exploration, then the amount of damage that would occur if Santos went to full production with 850 wells or more, is unthinkable," Anne Kennedy, a farmer from Coonamble said.

"Two weeks ago at Narrabri, over 600 people voted against CSG in the region and we're calling on the National Party today to support that resolution and join with us to shut down CSG in north-west NSW" she said.

# Thousands flock to Bentley to block Metgasco drilling



An estimated 2,000 people have joined residents of Bentley, west of Lismore, to oppose drilling at the site by unconventional gas miner Metgasco.

The gas company is undertaking an exploration well at Bentley that will target tight sands gas. Tight sands gas uses unconventional extraction methods like those used to extract coal seam gas, and involves large numbers of wells, extensive infrastructure, and risky fracking processes.

"We are here at this blockade to try to protect the valuable farmland and quiet rural lifestyle that we value so much from invasive gasfields" said Bentley resident Liz Stops.

"In a survey undertaken in our local area 84.5 per cent of 266 residents said that they do not want to live in a gasfield.

"The property owner where the drilling is scheduled to occur does not even live here.

"It is the rest of us whose home it is who will have to live with the consequences of this industry" she said.

We are enormously grateful that 2,000 committed citizens from across the Northern Rivers have come to join us to protect our beautiful region from the impacts of gas industrialisation" said local Bentley landholder Ross Joseph.

"We appreciate the extraordinary courage and determination they have shown in opposing these drilling operations.

"We believe the NSW Government is planning to send in large numbers of police to force their way on to the site this morning, on behalf of the gas company.

"We're asking them to urgently reconsider that approach, and to instead act now to discontinue unwelcome gas drilling in our region" he said.

Photos: Andy Gough, Jimmy Malecki, Sue Stock, Kathy Stavrou and Marie Cameron.



## All fired up



Photo: David Lowe

by Andy Gough

The NSW Rural Fire Service has been facing a lot of public criticism from its local membership over the controversial announcement to allow police to conduct operations from RFS facilities at Bentley.

Northern Rivers Zone Superintendent Michael Brett says he accepts end responsibility for the decision to allow police to use RFS facilities at Bentley as part of their imminent operation to allow coal seam gas company Metgasco access to a site in Bentley where they intend to start drilling a well.

Supt Brett says the RFS "take a neutral stance" about CSG, and can "only treat this on a purely operational basis, simply cooperating with a police request." However, he concedes the decision has been unpopular and that they have had loads of complaints and threats to resign from local members.

Brett insists that police will not be utilising any RFS resources other than the land and power for the duration of their operation. They will not be "taking over the shed" in any way, shape or form and no RFS personnel are assisting the police. There has however been a request for 'female officers' to be able to access the station's kitchen and toilet.

Bentley RFS will still be able to utilise the shed and respond to local fires. Brett cited the issuing of fire permits to the protest camp as further example of their neutral position.

Brett says he was approached by police to use the land at the Bentley station to park a 'command vehicle' and put some toilets there and access to 240v power. He says he briefed the Commissioner, and Richmond Valley Council had approved it. It was then put to Bentley brigade, who supposedly discussed it at their meeting and agreed.

Brett insists that had the Bentley brigade not agreed, he would have had to tell the police to go elsewhere.

Members of the Bentley brigade who spoke to NGT, but who did not wish to be

"As RFS volunteers we see ourselves as protectors of these valleys, and we are not happy about our resources being handed over to police for the purpose of further advancing coal seam gas operations in this region against the very clearly stated will of the community."

named, suggested that they were not at all in favour of the proposal, but that it had instead been presented to them as a "done deal", made "above our heads", and that they had been encouraged to "make the best of it".

In a move that will no doubt be adding salt to the wound for the RFS hierarchy, Craig Armstrong, who's family donated the land the Bentley fire shed is situated on, has also publicly criticised the RFS position and says the decision was pushed by Richmond Valley Council.

Glen Jones, deputy captain of the Larnook brigade, said, "It is being seen by the public to be taking sides in a politically charged dispute. The impending (police) operation at the Bentley site is not in relation to any emergency services or disaster relief."

Asked how the RFS would respond to trucks full of fireys showing up in support of the protest Michael Brett said, "that would be up to them."

On the issue of members protesting in uniform, Brett would not comment except to say members should check the code of conduct and be prepared for possible disciplinary action if appropriate.

Brett pointed to a statement on Facebook that the Commissioner Fitzsimmons has made about it: "The NSW RFS acknowledges that all people, including our own members, are entitled to their views on the exploratory drilling issue. The NSW RFS respects those views, including one's right to legally protest. Regardless of those rights however, criticism of the NSW RFS, simply for doing nothing more than cooperating with the Police so that they may do their job, is unfair and inappropriate."

Of course as police operations have reportedly been postponed for a week or so, there has yet to be any presence of NSW police at the Bentley RFS station whatsoever.

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# Bundjalung in Baigul country

by Binnah Pownall

In the last few years, there has been a growing dispute around the broader use of the term 'Bundjalung' to encompass and describe the various tribes of the North Coast area, of what is now called 'New South Wales', in what is now called Australia.

This dispute of the validity of the word 'Bundjalung' is very hard for many to confront. Being born in the area within the last forty years or so, many people have only known themselves to be 'Bundjalung' and nothing else.

It has been said that the Tribes were approached in the sixties with the promise of 'funding' if they complied to 'coming under the Bundjalung umbrella'. It was clear that, even by then, the government of the day had already decided that this North Coast area was to be called 'Bundjalung' as a region, to describe in general, the tribes who had lived here since creation.

But was the government right to do this? And how could they be so sure – or more so, did they really care if they got it right?

Before the Original families ever would have thought of themselves as Bundjalung, they may have known themselves to be as: Wahlabul, Werlabul or Wiabul. These tribal names are the more 'regional' or



local names for the tribes of this particular part of land.

These individual names and the individual spirit of some of the mobs would not be extinguished easily. Some particular tribes had not forgotten where they came from, and that some of their tribal language was unique to their country, and they were sure they were not Bundjalung, and they chose to be known more as their tribal name of Githabul, or Wiabul or Wahlabul, or Galibul.

The various methods deployed to destroy the all important oral history and general cultural ways of the Originies by the European invader government, caused the real story – of the Originies' delicate adherence to the law of nature, to become completely tainted with lies, untruths and misconceptions.

There was a time – probably in the 60's and 70's, where Ancestral Connection to country on the East Coast was thin on the ground, literally.

Where there seemed to be little or no knowledge of a local story, sometimes blackfellas fabricated another story to save face. Some moved to defend other parts of land because no other tribal person seemed to be defending it at that time, perhaps because there was no-one anymore who spoke for that particular part of country. Some took up the white man's recollection – often unknowingly, in a desperate attempt to remain connected to what they thought was their traditional land.

The government had very nearly succeeded in their ploy of moving blackfellas off their land and covering the many tracks regarding who belongs where – so much so, that – particularly on the East Coast, mobs from Melbourne to Cairns and further, were completely

routed and corrupted. Except for a few radicals (who went to Canberra), the sixties and seventies mark a time when many East Coast blackfellas moved to the suburbs and surrendered to the rat race...

When the well meaning Anthropologists and Linguists who studied the country from the mid to late 1800's onward attempted to document who was here on the north coast and hinterland... and where they belonged... and what they spoke, they came with all good intentions to document the human environment.

An oral culture which chose not to write anything down is easy to disrupt if you don't record right what hasn't been recorded before, and if one inadvertently changes some of the subtle nuances in the languages, it can cause immense problems later – witness the Ng'Arakwal (or Ngarahgwal as Margaret Sharpe spells it) /Arakwal debacle in Byron Bay, where the 'ng' sound seems to have been left out.

If someone moves the Original people off their land and separates the families, and there is no-one to pass the language, knowledge and stories of the family land onto, it can be lost forever. Much has been lost, but there is also much that has survived.

The Anthropologists and Linguists who came often with the explorers, loggers and pioneers also had an unrealised (at the time) and important role in holding information that helped maintain the links of the Originies to their land – information that would become the only source of reference for later study – when the deeper implications of colonialism took real hold.

After their arrival, the Anthropologists, Linguists and Historians' documentation has become integral in all of us understanding the Original story of our land. It appears

that only in the eyes of some Linguists, was there ever a region called 'Bundjalung'.

It is argued finally, that the word written by the linguists at that time (fifty years ago now) as 'Banjalung', was pronounced 'Bundjulung'. What happened then is that people, not knowing it was initially spelt differently by the linguists, started writing it out and saying it in its phonetic or pronounced form. From there, a lot of confusion has reigned.

All the tribes originally knew themselves as their local tribal names. The tribe of Bandjalang from around Coraki got mixed up in it because of the closeness in phonetics of the vowels 'a' and 'u' in linguistic terms. The word 'bundjalung' is actually a derivative from the word Bandjalang.

Government has not taken a position of authority on this matter, and the Geographical Names Board which has the ultimate sway in changing place names, seems happy to wipe tribes out of existence or allow groups to argue over the changes while it continues to name change without fear of consequence. This is causing oceans of unacceptable strife and confusion to Originie lives.

It is very important that this fallacy of Bundjalung be clarified. If words carry a vibration, the people need resolution of this issue so they can live from a more 'solid' base. This word dispute has gone on for way too long, fomenting division and animosity between families. People need the truth so they can stop living their lives based on something that never really existed.

*Binnah Pownall is a social worker with 30 years experience with the tribal people of the NSW North Coast. His intention lies in the desire to get Australia's black history out into the light, and has not intended to upset or offend anybody.*

# Don Page and Nationals 'off the rails'

by Garth Kindred

A Rail Strategy Group has been formed to step up pressure on the State Government to commit to repairing the Casino-Murwillumbah line and re-introducing train services at an early date. They are particularly keen to see a daily Lismore-Brisbane (via Casino and Kyogle) service introduced. The group consists of members of Trains On Our Tracks (TOOT) and the Northern Rivers Greens (NRG), and membership is open to anyone with an interest in seeing the trains return.

There were two key catalysts contributing to this groups' formation and the new initiatives being undertaken. The first was the recent visit to Lismore by Greens MLC Dr Mehreen Faruqi, who is championing the plight of Northern Rivers people, who have been left without any effective public transport. Lismore is the only major regional city in NSW to be without any rail service.

Ms Faruqi is questioning the accuracy of the costing report for the restoration of the Casino-Murwillumbah



Enthusiastic rail supporters at the March in March.

branch line. The \$952 million repair bill has been used by the pollies to say it's all too much to get the trains back, whilst spending billions of dollars in Sydney on rail and road projects.

"This rail line should be re-established to make a regular commuter service for locals and tourists. I am deeply concerned about proposals to rip up train lines to build rail trails. Rail trails can be useful tourist infrastructure but should co-exist, not replace, rail lines. It would be madness to tear up any rail line or infrastructure, just because the current government lacks the will to utilise them," Ms Faruqi said.

The second catalyst is the State Government's newfound love affair with rail trails. Ballina MP Don Page has embraced the rail trail movement. This has left train supporters suspicious of his motives. Some suspect that behind all this is a grab for precious rail land real estate. Trust in the Nationals has got train supporters nowhere. It's important to remember that not long ago Don Page and his Lismore counterpart, Thomas George, were themselves championing the TOOT cause and promised to get those trains back, once in office. At this stage, Labor has just introduced its own Rail

Trails Bill into Parliament, so any Labor support for the return of trains appears very doubtful.

For a rail trail to operate, there has to be legislative change to the *Transport Act*, which currently allows the railway tracks a protected status. There also needs to be considerable tens of millions of dollars spent to make the infrastructure safe and ready for bikes and horses.

The Rail Strategy Group is opposed to any developments that make it harder to make the tracks ready for trains. They do not want to see the conversion or removal of tracks to accommodate the needs of cyclists. Ideally, cyclists could board the trains with their bikes as they do in Europe, catch the train to Byron or wherever and go off riding for the day.

To demonstrate that local people support rail services rather than rail trails, both the Greens and TOOT have circulated petitions. An information brochure has also been developed.

The Rail Strategy Group is meeting monthly at South Lismore Bowling Club. For more details contact the author via: [kindred@nrg.com.au](mailto:kindred@nrg.com.au)

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# Regenerative biotecture goes west

by Duuvy Jester

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The course will be held near Goondiwindi, in the semi-arid region of central north NSW known mainly for cotton production and broad acre agriculture. There is very little in the way of organic



farming and natural building in the area.

The vision is for the farm to be converted from conventional desecrating agriculture to a full scale organic farm with a regenerative home at the heart of it.

Attendees are welcome to stay onsite and camp. The course will be completely

catered for with three meals a day, plus plenty of fresh fruit and refreshments.

A large part of this type of learning is living in community. Participants will be living, learning, building, eating and evolving with the same group of people for two weeks.

Each session will run for two weeks at a time.

Session one will run from 27th July to 10th August, session two from 26th August to 9th September, and session three from 24th September to 8th October.

The course fee is \$1550 for a single session. The theory will be the same in each session, however the practical work will vary depending on which stage of the build is completed in the previous session.

What you will be walking away with will be an honourable title in Regenerative Biotecture (RB).

There are some volunteer positions available for the set up crew, pre-build. So, book early if you are interested in that as spots are limited.

For more information on course structure or upcoming projects, go to: [www.terraeden.org](http://www.terraeden.org)

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## Jiggi students helping local wildlife and river health

Jiggi Public School students are participating in a program to help restore habitat for wildlife, including threatened species, at their school landcare site.

Students worked with members of the Jiggi Catchment Landcare Group and Barb Jenson from Rous Water to monitor the health of the Jiggi Creek, learn about local wildlife in their own backyards and plant trees.

Julie Reid, of Jiggi Catchment Landcare Group, described to the students how what was once a horse paddock for student's horses has been transformed into the flourishing riparian forest they have today.

The students surveyed Jiggi Creek for waterbugs, measured the temperature, salinity, pH and turbidity levels and learnt about activities that can impact on river health.

Students also learnt about Koalas and Squirrel Gliders, both threatened and found in their valley. The planting activity was an opportunity to take direct action to improve habitat for wildlife and help keep their creek healthy.

Jiggi Catchment Landcare Group Inc is working with a range of partners as part of the Rehabilitating High Conservation Habitats and Corridors project funded by the NSW Environmental Trust.



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## Letters

### Energy transition

My recent move to the Northern Rivers was inspired by the climate and beauty of the landscape. Now I am deeply moved and motivated by the people of the region as I quickly get up to speed with the horrific threat from the coal seam gas industry.

In the process of educating myself, I attended last week's forum at the Worker's Club. The evidence-based information from highly credible professionals and activists presented a solid case against mining. What impressed me most was the realisation that this protest is the effort of a whole community to stop an insanely destructive short-term energy solution.

The people leading this protest know they have the support of the majority of the region's population – and they have understood the importance of an inclusive and accessible community response, which educates and motivates participation. People have now been exposed to both sides of the argument. The employment, economic boost and energy contribution promised by unconventional gas will never outweigh the priority of protecting the long-term health of people, water, soil and air.

Transition is in the air. We are fast making a transition to understanding that creating a sustainable future is worth the brave actions many of us are and will be making in joining the resistance to unconventional gas. We understand that a sustainable future means a transition to sustainable energy. We will not only resist destructive mining practices, we need to embrace clean alternatives to transition to a sustainable energy future. I am inspired to join the people of the Northern Rivers now that I'm part of the community.

Kerry Gibson,  
Goonellabah

### Land ownership

Sadly, I was in attendance at the Casino RSM, CSG meeting, where John Fenton spoke of his ordeal at the hands of CSG people in the US.

I came to the meeting trying to show Jeremy Buckingham MP a piece of paper (a piece of paper with devastating impact), which proves all farmers to be illiterate, and proves unequivocally that CSG and/or other mining interests, can do absolutely anything to any land in this country, but sadly he did not seem to have time to hear the answer

to the CSG problem. Typical bloody politician.

The fact is that each land parcel contract contains two words of great significance and nobody sees them. You are a Tenant upon the land with "Right of Carriageway" across the land, but absolutely NO ownership to it... "for ever".

Those two words "for ever" are written into the deal by the Crown Corporation, without so much as a by your leave, and when your signature appears on the contract, the deal is sealed "for ever", no matter who purchases the tract of land now or in the future.

Kevin Japanangka,  
Federal

### Council passes TCP

At Richmond Valley Council's March meeting, a Traffic Control Plan for Bentley Road, where Metgasco is scheduled to drill a gas exploration well, was passed without debate.

I support temporary speed reductions in Bentley Road, however I have major concerns about the development process, as well as some conditions of the approved plan.

The TCP was undemocratically devised and strongly favours Metgasco. Thomas George was a member of the committee that assessed the TCP and this is a clear conflict of interest. As well, no local community members were invited to participate in devising the traffic control strategy.

The TCP favours Metgasco by keeping the public at bay and denying the right to access the road reserve. It creates a greater danger to pedestrians than no plan at all.

This is a highly contentious decision from a council that has assured us it is 'not in favour and not against' unconventional gas mining. Implementation of the TCP will make council complicit in the development of the industry in Bentley, an area in which 84.5% of 266 residents surveyed were opposed and only 3% were in favour.

Liz Stops,  
Bentley

### Where is the mayor?

Officially, Casino has a mayor, but he seems to have vanished. It seems that a de-facto, a Claytons' mayor has usurped Poor Old Ernie.

A surrogate mayor, Johnny Walker (not to be confused with Johnny Walker of whisky fame, though they both give you headaches) seems to run the show at Casino Council. He makes

### About us

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**NEXT DEADLINE:**  
Wednesday 30th April

**Email:** [nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com](mailto:nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com) or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

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The Tuntable Falls Primary School is seeking a Teachers Aide for a part-time position, starting 28th April.

Please download an information package from our website. Contact committee member Tien for further information on 6689 1917.

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[tunfalls@australis.net](mailto:tunfalls@australis.net)  
[www.tuntablefallsschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.tuntablefallsschool.nsw.edu.au)

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all the pronouncements, does all the press releases, runs the meetings, does all the public whingeing.

He does whingeing so extremely well that it has become repetitive and extremely monotonous. Poor Old Ernie is just a no-show. Has the bombastic buffoon of old mellowed into obscurity?

Its not that we miss Poor Old Ernie, far from it, but it is about time that he did the job that he was appointed to do and Johnny Walker attended to his own job description.

Don Durrant,  
Afterlee

### CSG regulations

Section 39 of the NSW Crimes Act 1900 states: "A person is guilty of an offence if:

- (a) the person ... causes another person to take, any poison, intoxicating substance or other destructive or noxious thing, and
- (b) the poison, intoxicating substance or other thing endangers the life of, or inflicts grievous bodily harm on, the other person, and
- (c) the person ... is reckless about injuring, the other person.

Maximum penalty: Imprisonment for 10 years."

If you know of anyone contravening this Section, please contact NSW police who will, I'm sure, be happy to send in the riot squad.

On a related note, the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, (DSM), is a standard psychiatric diagnostic manual. The latest version is controversial, but the next-to-latest version (DSM-IV-TR) was current from 2000 until February 2014.

For any individual who exhibits, long-term, the following three traits, DSM-IV-TR recommends a diagnosis of "Antisocial Personality Disorder", also sometimes referred to as psychopathy or sociopathy:  
• deception, as indicated by repeatedly lying, ... or

conning others for personal profit or pleasure

• reckless disregard for safety of self or others

• lack of remorse, as

indicated by being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt, mistreated, or stolen from another

If you know of anyone, especially if they are active in industry or government, displaying these symptoms, please encourage them to seek treatment before someone gets hurt.

Dr Sarah Antill,  
Roseberry Creek

### Why take the gamble on voting HEMP?

When I read that the HEMP Party candidates in the WA Senate election were to be the father and daughter team of James and Tayla Moylan, I was somewhat astonished, partly flabbergasted and slightly amused. HEMP has become the Help Elect Moylan Party!

As one of the founders of HEMP when it was a social movement called Help End Marijuana Prohibition, before it became a political party, I have observed that the political party phase of HEMP has been an unmitigated disaster, the train wreck named HEMP.

What the train wreck has left is an undemocratic, Nimbin-based rump, who follow in the orbit of Glenn Druery and his minor party alliance, hoping to achieve by Druery's good graces, their goal of parliamentary leather, and the loot that entails.

This rump controls the HEMP party's decision-making through its self-created constitution. They appoint the candidates and direct the preference flow. That is why I left, and why other hempsters have gone too. And the undemocratic rump is happy with that, because there is no democratic opposition to their rule.

HEMP, as a political party, stifles and destroys the movement for cannabis law reform. The obvious illustration: Why are there



Nice to see them out and about again...

no West Australians on the HEMP Western Australia HEMP Senate ticket? Haven't they got cannabis law reform activists in WA?

As a cannabis historian, I can assure you that WA has a long and proud tradition of campaigners for cannabis law reform. The sensible political decision would have been to endorse a local and help them build a WA branch, but running a local doesn't fit with the agenda of the Help Elect Moylan Party, so a Lismore, NSW, resident is imposed on a state several thousand kilometres away.

This is a repeat of what happened in Queensland in 2013, where we had Moylan foisted upon us. The local branch was destroyed amidst the disaster that was the Moylan-Yobbo ticket. Apparently, the discord this engendered has been forgotten, and the mistake needs to be repeated in some other, equally unfortunate, state.

As an elder of HEMP, I want to see the HEMP Party abolished. I want HEMP returned to being the social movement it was in the 1990s. Michael Balderstone has called Graham Askey a political genius. Under this political genius, HEMP has become a tiny clique in Nimbin, making grubby preference deals with the Shooters and Fishers Party, and alienating the rest of Australia by imposing James Moylan as candidate upon them.

HEMP hope Glenn Druery's Senate Lotto game will deliver them the ring of

power, but there are twenty-odd micro-parties, hoping for the same thing, and the probability is overwhelming that if you vote HEMP, your vote won't elect a Senator who supports drug law reform, but probably will end up delivering Tony Abbott a right-wing Senate.

John Jiggins,  
Brisbane

#### Pro-HEMP preferences

I notice on Facebook that the hills are again alive with voters whingeing about the preference deals sown up by the Hemp Party in the Western Australian Senate election. Folks have expressed their intention to storm the Hemp Embassy and sort the President out, verbally of course. There's even talk of a MardiGrass boycott, and so it goes on.

I vote for the Hemp Party with little expectation of success, but still do what I can to support the party's fight to end the prohibition of cannabis. Politics is a dirty business and any realist should realise that those who put themselves forward just might have to compromise to have any chance of being successful.

Sydney is a long way from Nimbin and whenever a Hemp Party event is held, here the same few people travel down to participate. None of those complaining about the preference deals are amongst that tiny group, but still they choose to denigrate the efforts of those in their community that spend most of their time fighting the unjust laws

that pertain to cannabis. I'm thinking their financial support of the party might just be as insignificant.

It's true that no-one is indispensable and the present office holders of the Hemp Party will be replaced sooner or later, but I don't see anyone clamouring to take their places. Until they do, I for one will continue to support the party's efforts to establish a place in the political landscape in this country with its blinkered views on all things Hemp.

Twiz Garratt,  
Denistone East

#### Litterbug

I pick up a lot of rubbish in my travels, and do a bit on Lillian Rock Road, where I keep finding these Bundaberg rum and coke tinnies with a black straw in them.

I thought to myself after repeatedly picking them up, that someone might know whose they are.

Can you stop throwing them out your window and take them home, then to the recycle station? Thanks.

Philip Cheek,  
Nimbin

#### Sick no more

I don't often take notice of advertising, but this time, I was glad, as I urgently needed a tech expert to sort out my four or five intractable (to me) computer problems.

Then I saw an ad for someone in the last NGT, who turned out to be Fabien, a very skilled and intelligent computer wiz, who took my sick machines away, and went beyond my hopes, reviving hard drives right and left, fixing things, and helping me get rid of a raft of annoying features and apps that I hated on my new computer.

Worth every cent of his very reasonable charge, and to be highly recommended!

Kathy Stavrou  
Nimbin

## Notices

### Lost bike

On Friday 7th March I was taking my son for a bike ride. He got too tired so we left the bike in some bushes in front of 445 Koonorigan Road, Koonorigan. When we came back to pick it up it was gone.

The bike is blue and green, has Monsters Inc pictures on it and training wheels. If someone has found it then please contact Sara on 0431-602-966 or email: [sarakhamkoed@hotmail.com](mailto:sarakhamkoed@hotmail.com) My son is really missing it, and it would make his day if it was returned.

### Bible College visitors

What do a journalist, a chef and an engineer have in common? Come and find out on Saturday 12th April at St Mark's Anglican Church, Nimbin, when a team of young visitors from Sydney's Mission Bible College will host a light lunch at noon in the church grounds.

### Embroiderers' group

Meetings are 9.30am-2.30pm every 1st and 3rd Wednesday and every 3rd Saturday of each month in the function room at the rear of the Red Dove Centre, Keen Street, Lismore.

Tutoring is available for new embroiderers, and workshops with local and visiting tutors are held throughout the year. Contact 0423-337-872.

### Open Mic Afternoon

Northern Rivers Greens present an Open Mic Fundraiser at South Lismore Bowlo, at 2pm on Sunday 27th April. \$5 concession/ \$10 waged/ \$15 family. Poets, musicians, comedians, feisty ranters, interpretative dancers welcome. Plus rock 'n' roll bowls featuring Decafé.

### Living and Dying Workshop

'Living and Dying Consciously' with clinical psychologist, Indivar from Fremantle. 21st - 22nd June, in Lismore. Enquiries please phone Elizabeth 6624-3707, text 0429-199-021.

### Sustainability Projects

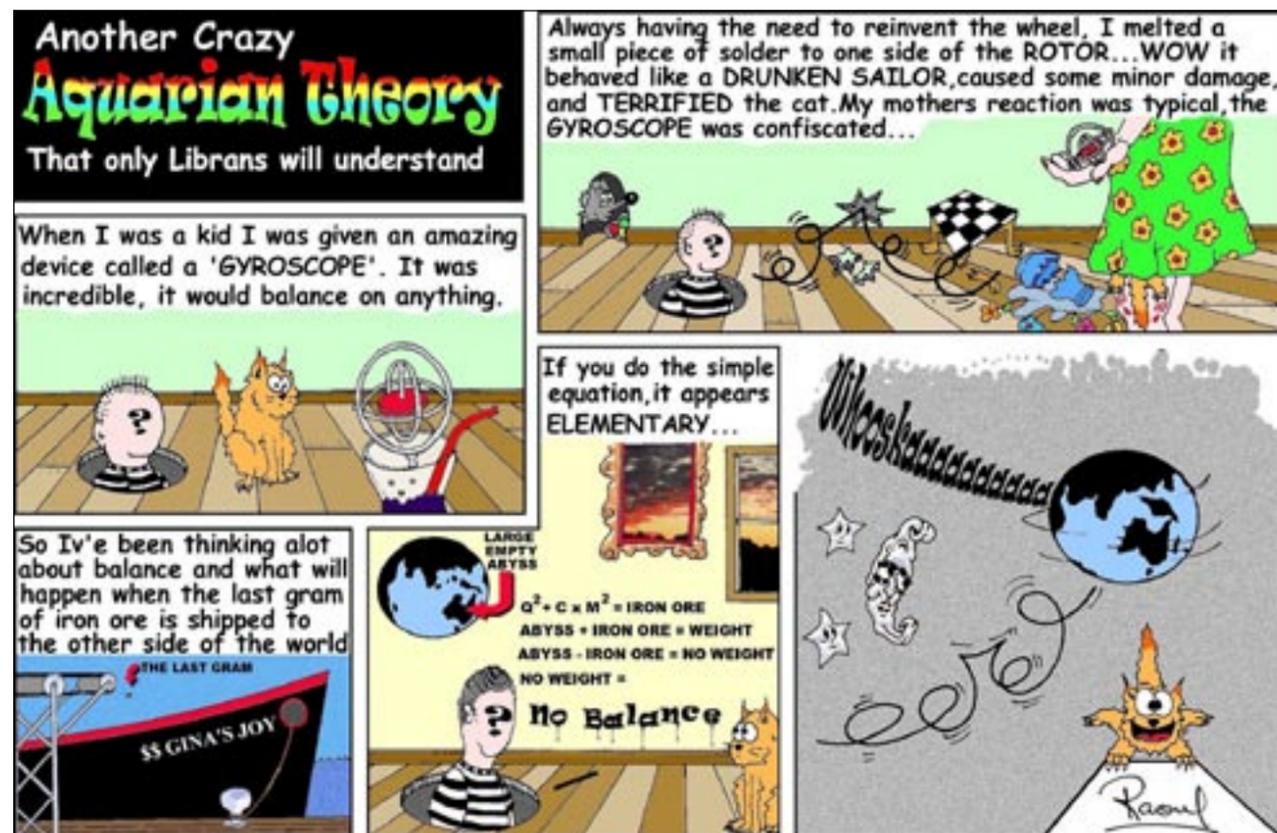
Djanbung Gardens is looking for expressions of interest for sustainability projects in our bioregion, to deliver a presentation at the Djanbung 20th Anniversary, 7th-9th June.

### House, Farm and Garden Weekend

Fabulous gardens, amazing hand-built houses, sustainable farms wanted for this year's event in September, as a fundraiser for the 7 Sibley Street project.

The organisers are especially keen to hear from people who have straw bale, mudbrick, sand-sawdust-cement, bamboo, hemp or earthship buildings.

Contact Cat at the Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre on 6689-1692 or email: [catanderson6@gmail.com](mailto:catanderson6@gmail.com)



### Letters to the editor

NGT welcomes letters by email or post by deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be cut. Letters already published elsewhere will usually not be considered. Include full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.